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"THE LESSON."

(Engraved by Frederick Juengling, after C. Noel Flagg.)



N the Spring Exhibition of 1884, at the Academy of Design, was exhibited a picture by C. Noel Flagg called "The Lesson." It was a work calculated to appeal rather to the artist and the connoisseur than to the general public—a study of a not attractive type of girlhood, and of a portion of a boy's body seen from behind, realized without prettiness, but with remarkable nerve and forceful truth. As a work of art it belonged among the best in the exhibition.

The painter of "The Lesson" is an American, born in Brooklyn in 1848, and educated chiefly in the studio of Jacques-Louis David in Paris, where he resided from 1871 till 1881. He first appeared at the Academy of Design as an exhibitor in 1876, and was among the exhibitors at the Salon of 1880, and since. He enjoys deservedly high repute in New York as a teacher. Laboring upon the lessons of an excellent school, with trained ability as a draftsman, and well grounded technique, his pictures are characterized by a boldness, breadth and strength of effect in color, treatment and arrangement of which "The Lesson" is perhaps the best example he has given out.

This picture, painted by an artist for the sake of his work in it, attracted the attention of another artist whose heart is wholly bound up in his art. The result was, the engraving after Mr. Flagg's picture, by Mr. Frederick Juengling, published with this issue of THE ART UNION.

The engraver has treated his subject with the hand of a master. No one who saw the picture can fail to recognize the wonderful fidelity and feeling by which the reproduction is characterized. The rendition of the values, the suggestion of the color, and the admirable reflection by the burin of the movement of the painter's brush, invest the block with the highest qualities of the noble art of which the boxwood is the medium. Mr. Flagg has been as happy in the translator who gives us his fine picture in black and white as the latter has been in his translation.

Mr. Juengling has, for some years past, been exceptionally happy in his translations of this character. An engraver of the first class, progressive and inventive to the verge of aggression; a tireless seeker after new truths and an indefatigable experimenter in new fields, his professional labors have been signalized by the most daring innovations and been rewarded by many triumphs. An artist as well as an engraver, he brings to every work he undertakes a sympathy with the art in it, a sensitiveness to its subtler qualities, which only the artist can experience. It is not the mere copying of a picture which produces such a block as "The Lesson." It is the transfer of an idea from one medium of expression to another.

For a couple of years Mr. Juengling has figured at our exhibitions as a painter of a merit so pronounced and a talent so vital and energetic, that it is assuming no risk to prophesy the place he might take in the field of productive art should he devote himself entirely to the easel. His works in oil exhibit a steady technical progression, and a growing refinement of feeling. His drawing is good, his color excellent, and his pictorial instinct singularly active and original. Thanks to native talent and a restless ambition inciting him from one exploit to another, from one experiment to another; cheering him in defeat and encouraging him to the encounter of obstacles which most men would find insurmountable, the future will recognize in him a remarkable figure in a remarkable epoch of our art: a type of the time, which finds no satisfaction in what is, save that of mastering it and making its conquest a stepping-stone to a victory still loftier and more daring.

ACCORDING to a variety hall song, a boy's best friend is his mother. In these days it is a toss up whether an artist's best friend is his landlord or his framemaker.

A MAGNIFICENT ART WORK.

WITH the next issue of THE ART UNION we shall commence a work of the utmost importance to art teachers and students: the republication, to wit, of "A Practical Treatise on Painting, consisting of Hints on Composition, Chiaroscuro and Coloring," by John Burnet. Recognized by the foremost authorities since its original publication, fifty years ago, as the most complete hand-book of the painters' art ever given to the press; as a work so invaluable that its material forms the basis of every volume pretending to treat of the same subject which has been compiled in later years, its age and rarity render it a costly curiosity in the libraries of the collectors. It is and has for more than a generation been inaccessible to the general public, a sealed treasure whose priceless value renders its removal from usefulness a misfortune.

We shall republish the "Treatise on Painting" in all its pristine magnificence of illustration, with the plates, complete as in the original, in monthly installments, to cover from twelve to fifteen issues of THE ART UNION. Subscriptions for the series can begin with the October number. If THE ART UNION possessed no other attractions, this should be sufficient to render it a welcome visitor at every door in America behind which art finds shelter. A good text-book is as imperatively necessary to the student of art as to the student of law or medicine. It is a guide, philosopher and friend, by whose experienced teachings the most brilliant talents grow more brilliant, and from which the most mediocre abilities gain advancement and improvement.

Such a text-book THE ART UNION proposes to provide, convinced that the results will be what any labor in the service of art is to us—one of love with ourselves and one of profit to our readers.

In the August number of the *Magazine of Art*, in the article on "Current Art," occurs the following astounding statement:

"In some departments of art, there can be no doubt we are not unsuccessful. In portraiture, allowing for the absence of certain qualities—as imagination, insight, the power of individualizing a type, and the presence of certain purely national conventions—we hold our own."

This reads about as sensibly as if one should say, "Barring the fact that they are stale and addled, the eggs are good to eat."

It seems to me high time that something should be done to encourage producers. The country is being overrun with art teachers and lecturers, because we don't want doers, but talkers. When we really want art, there will be a call for artists to paint, and producers will be respected, employed and encouraged.—*Wm. M. Hunt.*

A VIGOROUS attempt is to be made next winter to revivify the Society of American Artists. It is stated that arrangements will be perfected during the fall for securing a place of exhibition, which will be permanently consecrated to the Society's use. Arrangements will also have to be made to reform the Society's methods of dealing with non-conforming members and outside contributors before their body corporate will experience any healthy rejuvenation. This attended to, the gallery will be a secondary matter.

A PERSECUTED CLASS.

"DEAR MR. ART UNION:

"Knot avvin bin taut too rite Eye get a frend too right for me too tell U of migh murrssyless purssycooter man, hoo Eye am Surry too say, robs me of haf the clothin natcher has givin too us, and leaf us in winther eggsposed too coald and whet. Pray speke for us and oblige all our race.

"Yours very affeckshunately,
"Madison Square.



"A. POODLE."

"THE DARK DAYS" is the title of a large, etched picture-portrait of General Grant, just published by Mr. W. H. Shelton. It represents the General mounted with an orderly in attendance, reconnoitering the field before Petersburg. The landscape is bare and wintry, and the ground patched with snow. Both as a work of portraiture and of art the picture commands the highest praise. It is one of the finest as well as largest etchings ever made in America.